

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 211714

61

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT PRIORITY

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INFORM CONSULS

KUWAIT POUCH MUSCAT, DOHA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING IS PARTIAL
EXCERPT FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING
OCTOBER 26, 1973:

QUOTE: Q. GENERAL SECRETARY BREZHNEV ANNOUNCED TODAY THAT
THE SOVIET UNION HAD SENT WHAT HE SAID WERE SOME REPRESENTATIVES TO THE MIDDLE EAST TO OBSERVE THE CEASE-FIRE AT THE REQUEST OF PRESIDENT SADAT, AND HE SAID HE HOPED THE UNITED STATES WOULD DO THE SAME. ONE -- HAS THE SOVIET UNION INFORMED THE UNITED STATES OF THIS ACTION, AND DO WE KNOW WHEN IT TOOK PLACE. WHAT IS OUR REACTION?

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 211714

A. I AM NOT AWARE THAT A SPECIFIC COMMUNICATION ON THE DISPATCH OF THEIR PEOPLE TO THE MIDDLE EAST WAS SENT HERE, ALTHOUGH THAT POSSIBILITY WAS ANTICIPATED. I WOULD HAVE TO SAY, AS A RESULT OF EXCHANGES THAT WENT BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND MOSCOW OVER THE LAST TWENTY-FOUR, THIRTY-SIX HOURS.

NOW, WE DON'T KNOW HOW MANY HE IS TALKING ABOUT. WE OURSELVES ARE PREPARED TO SEND SIMILAR REPRESENTATIVES. AND I WANT TO MAKE CLEAR HERE THAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT THE

OBSERVER GROUP. THAT IS AN AUGMENTED UNTSO. OUR FEELING IN PRINCIPLE IS THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER IF THE PRINCIPAL WHICH APPLIES TO THE PEACE-KEEPING FORCE OR THE UNEF-- THAT IS TO SAY THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO BIG POWER REPRESENTATION IN IT -- WOULD APPLY ALSO TO UNTSO. BUT AS I HAVE SAID, IF THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS IS AGREEABLE TO SOME REPRESENTATION FROM THE SOVIET UNION AND THE U.S., WE WILL ACCEPT THAT. AND I SHOULD ADD THAT IT IS OUR VIEW THAT IF IT DEVELOPES THAT BOTH THE SOVIET UNION AND THE U.S. DO INDEED HAVE REPRESENTATIVES IN AN AUGMENTED UNTSO, THAT THEY SHOULD HAVE NO DIFFERENT STATUS THAN THE NATIONALS OF WHATEVER OTHER COUNTRIES WHO MAY EVENTUALLY BE REPRESENTED.

I THINK YOU KNOW THAT IN THE PRESENT UNTSO, WHICH I DISCUSSED HERE A FEW DAYS AGO, THERE ARE, AS BEST WE CAN COUNT, SOME EIGHT U.S. REPRESENTATIVES ALREADY A PART OF THE GROUP, WHICH IN TOTAL NUMBERS ABOUT 215.

BUT I WANTED TO GO ON AT THAT LENGTH TO DRAW ATTENTION TO AN ISSUE OF PRINCIPLE SO FAR AS WE ARE CONCERNED, AND TO MAKE THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE OBSERVER FORCE AND THE PEACE-KEEPING FORCE.

Q. BOB, COULD YOU TELL US WHAT RELATION THERE WILL BE, IF ANY, BETWEEN UNTSO AND UNEF?

A. THESE WILL BE, ACCORDING TO OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONCEPT, SEPARATE UNITS, ONE BEING AN OBSERVER FORCE AND ANOTHER BEING A PEACE-KEEPING FORCE. THERE HAS BEEN NO UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 211714

PEACEKEEPING FORCE AS SUCH IN THE MIDDLE EAST SINCE I SUPPOSE IT WAS EARLY IN JUNE 1967.

NOW I THINK YOU HAVE READ THAT -- AND I WILL LIMIT MY REMARKS HERE BECAUSE I DON'T WANT TO SPEAK TOO COMPLETELY FOR THE SECRETARY GENERAL, AND I DO THIS ON BACKGROUND -- THAT SO FAR AS THE UNEF IS CONCERNED, HIS PRESENT THINKING WOULD BE TO BEGIN TO STAFF THAT FROM THE PEACE-KEEPING

UNITS OF SOME OF THE FLAGS THAT ARE REPRESENTED IN CYPRUS. NOW, HOW THE FULL COMPOSITION OF THAT GROUP WILL EVENTUALLY DEVELOP, WE CAN'T SAY, EXCEPT THAT WE FEEL RATHER STRONGLY, AS WE INDICATED IN THE UN, THAT IT SHOULD NOT CARRY REPRESENTATION FROM THE GREAT POWERS.

Q. IT DIDN'T MENTION THAT IT WAS COMING UNDER THE UN FLAG, BUT RATHER JUST SAID SOVIET REPRESENTATIVES HAD ANSWERED SADAT'S CALL. HE WAS LOOKING UPON IT I THINK EX PARTE.

A. WELL, WE MAKE THE ASSUMPTION THAT THESE ARE NON-COMBAT PERSONNEL, WHO WOULD BE FOLDED IN UNDER THE AUGMENTED UNTSO.

Q. THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC YESTERDAY PROTESTED DELIVERIES OF U.S. SUPPLIES OUT OF GERMANY TO ISRAEL. AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND WAS DESCRIBED AS HAVING EXPRESSED REGRETS OVER A LACK OF COMMUNICATIONS IN THIS CONTEXT. AND IN AT LEAST ONE MORNING PAPER HERE IN WASHINGTON, THIS WAS DESCRIBED AS A POSSIBLE MAJOR SOURCE OF FRICTION BETWEEN BONN AND WASHINGTON. WOULD YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ON THAT?

A. WELL, LET ME SAY THAT OUR VIEW IS THAT THE MAINTENANCE OF THE MILITARY BALANCE AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A DURABLE PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST, WHICH IN OUR VIEW AND BY OUR ACTION IS WHAT THE RESUPPLY OF ISRAEL IS ABOUT, IS JUST AS MUCH IN THE VITAL INTERESTS OF WEST GERMANY AND OUR OTHER NATO ALLIES AS IT IS IN OUR INTEREST AND THAT OF THE WORLD AT LARGE.

LET ME ADD THAT WE REMAIN IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH THE WEST GERMANS ON THIS MATTER, AND I THINK YOU WILL NOTE THAT THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC'S AMBASSADOR IS COMING IN TO SEE THE SECRETARY LATER TODAY. THAT IS AT HIS REQUEST.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 211714

WE HAVE BEEN IN A VERY CRITICAL PERIOD, A PERIOD WHICH AFFECTED IN MANY WAYS ALL OF US, OURSELVES AND OUR ALLIES IN WESTERN EUROPE. AND THAT WE WERE STRUCK BY A NUMBER OF OUR ALLIES GOING TO SOME LENGTHS TO IN EFFECT SEPARATE THEMSELVES PUBLICLY FROM US. AND IT RAISES THE QUESTION FOR US AS TO HOW THAT ACTION ON THEIR PART CAN BE SQUARED WITH WHAT THE EUROPEANS HAVE OFTEN REFERRED TO AS THE INDIVISIBILITY BETWEEN US ON MATTERS OF SECURITY.

Q. SECRETARY SCHLESINGER SAID THAT THE IMMEDIATE PRECIPITATING CAUSE FOR LAST NIGHT'S MEETING WAS NOT MILITARY -- HE SAID THAT THE IMMEDIATE PRECIPITATING CAUSE FOR LAST NIGHT'S EMERGENCY NSC MEETING WAS NON-MILITARY, IT FELL IN THE AREA OF AMBIGUOUS SIGNALS, WHICH I THINK SECRETARY KISSINGER ALSO REFERRED TO YESTERDAY. CAN YOU SAY WHAT HE

IS TALKING ABOUT? IS HE TALKING ABOUT THE SOVIET NOTE?

A. WELL, GO BACK TO WHAT -- I DON'T HAVE THE FULL TRANSCRIPT OF WHAT SECRETARY SCHLESINGER SAID, HAVING HAD JUST A SUMMARY ACCOUNT OF IT. BUT HE DEALT ALSO WITH OTHER INDICATIONS IN ATTEMPTING TO DEFINE THE NATURE AND THE ANTECEDENT AND THE BACKGROUND OF OUR RESPONSE. AND INDEED, THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THE SAME THING YESTERDAY . SO I WOULD HAVE TO SAY -- AND I WILL HAVE TO DO IT ON BACKGROUND -- THE DIRECT ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION IS YES. END QUOTE. KISSINGER

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